

NEMOPHILA

Meeting and Field Guide

CALIFORNIA BOTANICAL SOCIETY

SEPTEMBER 1, 1919

NUMBER 4

The purpose of the Society is to promote the botanical study and investigation of California plants, to diffuse knowledge concerning them, and by lectures, field-trips, exhibitions and publications to deepen interest in the native flora amongst the people of California.

FIELD TRIPS.

Sunday, September 7. Study of rare shrubbery and tuberous begonias at home of Mrs. John S. Wood, 1120 Morton St., Alameda. Meet corner Thirteenth and Washington Sts., 2:30 p. m. Leader, Miss Amy Rinehart.

Sunday, September 21. Walk to Bay Farm Island for study of Salt Marsh Plants. Meet at High St. and San Jose Ave., Alameda, 2:30 p. m. Leader, Miss Harriet Walker.

YERBA BUENA LEAVES.

Mr. E. W. Holway, recently elected a member of the Society, starts this month for Chili and Peru for the purpose of studying the rust flora of those countries. Mr. Holway has collected extensively in many parts of the United States (including California) and British Columbia and also in Cuba, Costa Rica and Guatemala; he is the author of many important papers relating to rusts.

Mrs. M. S. Clemens of Pacific Grove, a recently elected member of the Society, returned last spring from Borneo, where she and her husband, Captain Clemens, made extensive collections of ferns and orchids. The latter are now being studied by Professor Oakes Ames of Harvard, who reports that of the 151 species collected 101 are new to science.

We were delighted with the wealth of information in the leaflet calendar "Nemophila"—much in little, or as Peter Ibbetson had it, *parva sed apta*, small but fit.—Mrs. Clara A. Hunt, St. Helena.

The LeConte Memorial Lectures were instituted this year in the Yosemite in honor of the naturalist and geologist, Joseph LeConte. The lectures have attracted wide attention. The speakers included Dr. Willis L. Jepson, who opened the course with three lectures relating to the Botany of the Yosemite. Dr. W. F. Badè lectured on John Muir, Nature and Yosemite. The lectures were given in front of the LeConte Memorial Lodge in the early evening hours.

Mr. Henry John Elwes, F. R. S., a well known English farmer, world traveler and distinguished student of forest trees, visited Berkeley in May. He is the author, with Augustine Henry, of a great illustrated work on the Forest Trees of Great Britain and Ireland.

Mr. S. B. Parish of San Bernardino is continuing his investigations of Southern California seed plants at the herbarium of the University at Berkeley.

Dr. T. C. Frye, Professor of Botany in the University of Washington, devoted several weeks to bibliographic research in the libraries of the University of California during August.

Dr. W. C. Blasdale, Vice-President of the Society, explored Yosemite Valley in June and July for material in furtherance of his investigations on rusts. He collected about forty species in the valley. His "Preliminary List of the Uredinales of California," appeared in print on August 14 (Univ. Calif. Publ. Bot. vol. 7, No. 5).

Items for "Nemophila" should be sent to Professor C. B. Bradley, 2639 Durant Ave., Berkeley, Cal.

The Secretary-Treasurer of the Society is Miss Anna E. Ehlers, 2613 Durant Ave., Berkeley. (Telephone Berkeley 3699).

CHRISTMAS BERRY.

Lakeside Park, Oakland, has large groups of the Christmas Berry, *Heteromeles arbutifolia*. We should be proud of this native shrub as it has a high value in

landscape gardening. It is evergreen. In summer the small white panicles of flowers give life to the foliage and the red berries of fall and winter give the joy of Christmas cheer. It is easily raised from seed, endures drought and abuse and readily adapts itself to a small yard. It should find its way into every home garden. It responds to cultivation, and pruning will keep it from becoming straggly. The cutting back starts new growth, generally three shoots, and from the base of these the bearing wood or berry producing stalks will sprout. The cutting of berries with generous branches or foliage is sufficient pruning. The long shoots which do not bear should be cut back so as likewise to produce bearing wood. The limbs of straggly growth when resting on the ground will take root, which is not characteristic of many shrubs. It bears about the third year from seed. The natural growth rarely exceeds 20 feet and its life is about 75 years. It is sometimes seen with dirty black foliage. This is due to aphids excreting "honey dew," causing dust and dirt to adhere. Soapsuds from the laundry swished on with a broom is a good remedy.

At Lakeside there is indication of two varieties. One has the usual green leaf, lighter beneath, with serrated edge and bearing bright coral red berries. Alongside may be found a more dwarf shrub with deep dark leaves, lighter underneath, but the leaves are less serrated and the edges curl under instead of being flat. The berries are dark ruby. These differences persist year after year. Most of the berries shipped in to florists from the north at Christmas time have a yellowish green foliage. This seems to be due to climatic conditions. Seeds from such branches planted in the Park failed to develop yellowish foliage. Irrigation promotes the berry crop. The season of 1918 was dry, the shrubs in the foothills were berryless, yet the Park had the usual crop. Observations from others would be of interest.—Geo. B. Furniss.

THE BOTANICAL RANGE OF CHRISTMAS BERRY.—The natural range of this species is not well known, especially in the Sierra Nevada. In that range it is known to occur in the foothills from Butte county to Calaveras

county and Mariposa county, but no records southward have been made. Probably it is most abundant in the Coast Ranges from Napa county to Mendocino county.—W. L. Jepson.

SMILO GRASS.

Oryzopsis miliacea, indigenous to Europe, is a new and very promising dry-land perennial forage grass. A common name was wanted and I suggested San Diego Grass as a good name. The promoter advertised it as Smilo Grass, "because any cow would smile to see it." The name is objectionable, being too much like Milo, but this is a case where a pure invention has caught on. The name Smilo is everywhere now and you can't stop it.—P. B. Kennedy.

SAN CARPOFORO CAÑON TO THE NACIMIENTO RIVER.

An hour more of rough going brought us to a wide glade wooded with oaks of unusual size and beauty. They were the great valley oak of California, the roble of the Spaniards. The species was well known to me, but nowhere else have I seen it reach the stateliness of these superb trees. The huge white trunks and fountain-like flow of branches had a sort of Greek perfection, and one could easily understand why, if Greece had such oaks as these they were held sacred to Zeus. Here were the remains of a house, and I searched again for water, for I was getting pretty thirsty. But the cracked troughs in the old corral gave notice that I need not expect to find any, and seemed to hint at the reason for the abandonment of this handsome homestead.

A short distance beyond this place the trail emerged at a divide, and I saw with relief the cañon of the Nacimiento lying below, with one pool of blue water shining among its sun-bleached boulders. The opposite wall was a high, perpendicular bluff of purple-red rock, barren except for a few spectral digger pines that grew in crannies, or leaned in languid attitudes on the summit. It was an unusual landscape and one worthy of particular notice, but I was too tired and thirsty to enjoy it, and hurried on to get down to the stream.—Smeaton Chase, *Coast Trails*, p. 174.